CLAIMS: The following is a listing of all claims in the application with their status and the text of all active claims.

1. (ORIGINAL) A method for facilitating language learning which is performed over a target language that can be a foreign language or the native language of the learner, wherein said method is characterized by the user listening to certain aural reproductions utilizing certain facilitating means, wherein

   a. said facilitating means facilitate that the user perceive the sonorous features of the target language, i.e. those features that are related to the pronunciation, the intonation, the rhythm, the metrical structure, and/or the prosody of the target language; said facilitating means facilitate that the user develops the capacity to perform said perception; or said facilitating means facilitate to achieve both goals,

   b. said aural reproductions might have been generated with real utterances produced by speakers or by speech technology systems, and said aural reproductions can be full reproductions or empty reproductions, wherein

      – full reproductions correspond to real samples of the target language,

      – empty reproductions are not real samples of target language, but they contain sequences of sounds that reproduce the prosodic patterns of the target language by variations in tone, intensity or duration,

   wherein said method can be used in isolated fashion or as a complement in an approach whose goal might be to facilitate language learning, to present samples of a foreign language, or to correct some problem in the utilization of a native language.

2. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said empty reproductions might have been created by a plurality of ways, such as for example one of the following:

   – filtering full reproductions of the target language, so that the phonetic information of such full reproductions is eliminated or greatly reduced, while at the same time the prosodic information of said full reproductions is maintained,

   – linking syllable sounds, such as for example "la-la-la…" or other syllables that might be equal or different to each other,

   – after full reproductions, in such as way that all the vocalic sounds are replaced by the same vowel, so that the empty reproductions have a similar prosody to the prosody that those full reproductions have,

− linking sounds whose wave form is periodic, such as for example pure tones or vocalic sounds,

− after full reproductions, by removing consonants so that only vocalic sounds remain, and the resulting reproductions have a similar prosody to the prosody that said full reproductions have,

− in any other way

3. (CURRENTLY AMMENDED) A method as claimed in claim 1, which is performed by performing one or more exercises, wherein for at least one of said exercises there exists one or more empty reproductions and one or more real samples of the target language, so that for at least one of said empty reproductions there is at least one real sample, among said real samples of the target language, that has an equivalent prosodic content, wherein said method comprises the steps of:

− presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said real samples of the target language,

− presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said empty reproductions,

− associating, by the learner, of the empty reproductions with the real samples of the target language that have a similar prosodic content as they have.

4. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said characterizing information that is presented to the user about said real samples of target languages are the sonorous reproductions of said real samples of language, i.e., they are full reproductions.

5. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said characterizing information that is presented to the user about said real samples of target language are the written transcripts of said real language samples.

6. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein there exists one single empty reproduction, and the learner must indicate the real sample or real samples of target language that correspond to said empty reproduction..

7. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein there exists one single real sample of target language, and the learner must indicate the empty reproduction or reproductions that correspond to said real sample of target language.

8 – 13 (CANCELLED)

14. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said aural reproductions are full reproductions and wherein said facilitating means are based on providing the user with instructions to listen those full reproductions in a special way.

15. (ORIGINAL) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein said special way is based on providing the user with instructions to pay attention to perceive the evolution of one of the following features:
    – the rhythm of certain parts of said full re productions,
    – the vocalic sounds, i.e., vowels, semivowels and diphthongs,
    – the vowels,
    – the consonants,
    – the syllables or a part of them such as their nucleus,
    – the words, which would yield the user to follow the rhythm of appearance of words,
    – groups of words that because of the prosody of the reproduction seem to have some relationship among themselves.

16-18 (CANCELLED)

19. (ORIGINAL) A system for facilitating language learning which is performed over a target language that can be a foreign language or the native language of the learner, wherein said system comprises the following means:

   a. means to create certain aural reproductions that the user will listen to,

   b. facilitating means that facilitate that the user perceive the sonorous characteristics of the target language, i.e., characteristics that are related to the related to the pronunciation, the intonation, the rhythm, the metrical structure, and/or the prosody of the target language; that facilitate that the user develops the capacity to perform said perception; or that facilitate to achieve both goals,

   wherein said aural reproductions might have been generated with real utterances produced by speakers or by speech technology systems, and said aural reproductions can be full reproductions or empty reproductions, wherein

   – full reproductions correspond to real samples of the target language,

   – empty reproductions are not real samples of target language, but they contain sequences of sounds that reproduce the prosodic patterns of the target language by variations in tone, intensity or duration,

   wherein said method can be used in isolated fashion or as a complement in an approach whose goal might be to facilitate language learning, to present samples of a foreign language, or to correct some problem in the utilization of a native language.

20. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 19, wherein said empty reproductions might have been created by a plurality of ways, such as for example one of the following:

   – filtering full reproductions of the target language, so that the phonetic information of such full reproductions is eliminated or greatly reduced, while at the same time the prosodic information of said full reproductions is maintained,

   – linking syllable sounds, such as for example "la-la-la…" or other syllables that might be equal or different to each other,

   – after full reproductions, in such as way that all the vocalic sounds are replaced by the same vowel, so that the empty reproductions have a similar prosody to the prosody that those full reproductions have,

   – linking sounds whose wave form is periodic, such as for example pure tones or vocalic sounds,

   – after full reproductions, by removing consonants so that only vocalic sounds remain, and the resulting reproductions have a similar prosody to the prosody that said full reproductions have,

   – in any other way

21. (CURRENTLY AMMENDED) A system as claimed in claim 19, further comprising means to execute one or more exercises, wherein for at least one of said exercises there exist one or more empty reproductions and one or more real samples of the target language, so that for at least one of said empty reproductions there is at least one real sample, among said real samples of the target language, that has an equivalent prosodic content, wherein said exercise comprises the steps of:

   – presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said real samples of the target language,

   – <u>presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said empty reproductions,</u>

   – associating, by the learner, of the empty reproductions with the real samples of the target language that have a similar prosodic content as they have.

22. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein said characterizing information that is presented to the user about said real samples of target languages are the sonorous reproductions of said real samples of language, i.e., they are full reproductions.

23. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein said characterizing information that is presented to the user about said real samples of target language are the written transcripts of said real language samples.

24. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein there exists one single empty reproduction, and the learner must indicate the real sample or real samples of target language that correspond to said empty reproduction..

25. (ORIGINAL) A system as claimed in claim 21, wherein there exists one single real sample of target language, and the learner must indicate the empty reproduction or reproductions that correspond to said real sample of target language.

26 – 42 (CANCELLED)

26. (NEW) A computer readable medium containing computer executable instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a computer, allow said one of more processors to execute the following steps:
    – managing one or more empty reproductions and one or more real samples of a target language, so that for at least one of said empty reproductions there is at least one real sample, among said real samples of the target language, that has an equivalent prosodic content
    – presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said real samples of the target language,
    – presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said empty reproductions,
    – receiving the association performed by the learner of the empty reproductions with the real samples of the target language that have a similar prosodic content as they have.

27. (NEW) A computer readable medium containing a data set that, when interpreted by one or more processors of a computer, allows said one of more processors to perform the following steps:
    – presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said real samples of the target language,
    – presenting the learner with characterizing information about one or more of said empty reproductions